



**TEL** 01491 573535  
**EMAIL** [hq@oss.org.uk](mailto:hq@oss.org.uk)  
**WEB** [www.oss.org.uk](http://www.oss.org.uk)

07 May 2014

Dear Member

### **Act now to save our threatened greens**

In April I completed 30 years as your general secretary. *In all that time I have never known our green spaces to be in such peril as they are today.*

Last year the Growth and Infrastructure Act in England outlawed the registration of land as a green where it is earmarked for development. Welsh ministers are threatening to introduce a similar law in their Planning Bill.

A damaging provision of the act, 'landowner statements', is now in force. This encourages landowners to send the registration authority (county or unitary council) a statement that declares the owner's intention to terminate informal use of the green. Once the landowner has sent his statement, local people have only one year in which to apply to register the land as a green—or lose their rights for ever.

The landowner is required to put notices on the land but these can 'disappear' and need not be replaced. So residents may not even know that their rights are threatened and that the clock is ticking.

We have asked all 150 registration authorities in England to inform us of any such statements. When we receive these we tell local members, ask them to inspect the land and offer our expert help in registering it as a green if it is eligible.

This means that our small and already over-stretched staff must work extra hours. Proportionally to the capacity of a small office, the new work is a massive load—and of course it comes at a cost. We are also supporting a challenge in the courts to the interpretation of the new legal events which prevent people from being able to register greens.

Against the odds we are working to mitigate these oppressive new laws, and with your help we shall save the greens.



**The Open Spaces Society 25a Bell Street Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BA**



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07 May 2014

Page 2

Please support us in this vital work, by giving to our threatened greens appeal. Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely

*Kate Ashbrook*

Kate Ashbrook  
General Secretary

*PS Please send your cheque to Open Spaces Society, FREEPOST (RG1344), Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 2BA or visit our website <http://www.oss.org.uk/make-a-donation/>. Thank you.*



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